

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 8, line 3 (paragraph [0023]) with the following amended paragraph:

Fig. 1 is a diagram for explaining a general system of an ASP electronic mall. The ASP electronic mall is what is called an application shopping center, in which a plurality of applications provided by a plurality of ASPs are prepared and various services for utilizing the applications are offered to the users. Each user can utilize any of the applications by connecting his terminal 111 to the ASP electronic mall through a high-speed line. The ASP electronic mall system 108 is configured of an ASP mall server 107, an ASP registration DB 105 and a membership DB 109. The ASP electronic mall is a membership system in which application users and ASPs are required to register beforehand. The registered data are stored and managed in the membership DB 109. The applications offered by the ASPs are registered in the ASP registration DB 105. The ASP mall server 107 includes a registration processing function 104, a registered information search function 101, an application execution function 102 and a settlement infrastructure function 103. The registration processing function 104 operates to write the necessary information in the membership DB 109 and the ASP registration DB 105 at the time of new registration of a user or an ASP. The information search function 101 connects an application meeting the needs of the user to the ASP registration DB 105 and supplies the result of the search. The settlement infrastructure function 103 records the application utilization start time and the application utilization end time in the account pending file [[109]]106 for any user who may utilize an application. The record in the account pending file [[109]]106 is collated with the utilization charge recorded in the ASP registration DB 105 thereby to perform the process for settling the accounts with the user and the ASP. Each ASP connects his server 110 to the ASP electronic mall server 107 to register, delete or change an application.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 10, line 8 (paragraph [0025]) with the following amended paragraph:

Fig. 3 is a diagram showing a structure of account pending files 106. The account pending file 106 is generated for each user. A file A 301 is an application utilization management file for the user Mr. A. The user name [[202]]302 is a character string indicating the name of the user that has utilized an application. An ASP/AP name 303 is a character string indicating the name of a source ASP and an application name. Each record is configured of a repetitive structure including a start 304 and an end 305 for each application. The start 304 is a numerical value at which a given application is started by the user. The end 305

is a numerical value indicating the time at which the utilization of a given application ends.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 11, line 7 (paragraph [0027]) with the following amended paragraph:

Fig. 5 is a flowchart showing the whole process of the ASP electronic mall system. A user who has accessed the ASP electronic mall system 108 logs in to the ASP mall server 107 (step 500). In the case where the user acquires the membership for the first time (YES in step 501) without any request for test use (NO in step [[500]]511), the necessary items are registered in the membership DB 109 (step 502) and the account is settled for the admission fee (step 503). In the case where the user requests a test use (YES in step 511), on the other hand, a provisional guest ID is issued to the user, and the execution of the application becomes possible in bench mark mode (step 513). After that, the process proceeds to step 504. In the case where the user has already acquired a membership (NO in step 501), the search request information is received from the user (step 504), and the application involved is retrieved from the ASP registration DB 105 and set in usable state (step 505). The application that has become executable and the function thereof are executed by an application execution function 102 upon receipt of an application execution request (step 506). At the same time, the history of utilization of the application is generated in the account pending file 106 (step 507) and managed. Once the user logs out of the ASP mall server 107 (step 508), the process is terminated if the application is in bench mark mode (YES in step 509). In the case where the application is not in bench mark mode (NO in step 509), on the other hand, the utilization charge of the user and the application service charge for the ASP are settled (step 510).